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AUTHOR Stone, J. Fulton
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ABSTRACT

The concept of staff development and continuous improvement for teachers and administrators is discussed in the context of a state-developed plan that allows teacher certification renewal only after participation in an approved local staff development program. The plan stipulates that local educational agencies identify student needs and competencies needed by educational personnel and plan training activities for teachers, administrators, and other school personnel to meet those needs. The steps included in this plan are: (1) determining priority student needs and causes of needs; (2) selecting educational improvement activities; (3) specifying competencies needed by educational personnel; (4) designing the staff development program; and (5) evaluating and assessing the program. The document also provides a list of resources for technical assistance for implementing similar programs, a budget information sheet, and a guideline on procedures and standards for certification renewal through local staff development. (DS)

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Program Title - Georgia's State Plan for Staff Development

By Mr. J. Fulton Stone
Staff Development Coordinator
Georgia Department of Education
302 State Office Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

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INTRODUCTION

For many years educators have been in almost unanimous agreement that few teachers and administrators enter the educational community truly prepared to carry out the functions of their positions. Undergraduate and graduate training, for the most part, was only an introduction or orientation for the teaching profession. Development into a full-fledged teacher or administrator depended on the effects of the first few years' working experience in a particular job.

Once values and habits are set, principals and teachers are unlikely to change noticeably throughout their careers; more often professional development tapers off. The power of a community of students, teachers and administrators to shape and mold the beliefs and behavior of its population has been dramatically documented by such eminent sociologist/educators as Willard Waller. Occasionally, a teacher or principal will take a college course for certification purposes, but it seldom seems to make much difference.

The concept of staff development and continous improvement for teachers and administrators has been a part of this country's educational efforts for most of this century, but has remained, almost uniformly, a sad second-rate priority known as "in service." Strife in the decade of the '60s woke up educators to the fact that there is an urgent need for continous self-improvement and adjustment to a changing culture. This realization has become the keystone to renewed staff development efforts across the nation and in Georgia.

SP013 242

Because of this growning realization there began in the late '60s and early '70s, the development of a policy in Georgia recognizing the need for continous improvement of the basic skills and knowledge of practicing educators. A natural adjunct to this belief was the position that continuous staff improvement should become the basis for the recertification of educational personnel.

Early in 1973, the Georgia Teacher Education Council appointed an ad hoc committee on staff development. This committee--composed of representatives from higher education, local school systems, professional educational organizations and the Georgia Department of Education--developed goals, functions and standards of a comprehensive staff development plan. This plan allows local educational agencies to identify student needs and competencies needed by educational personnel and plan training activities for teachers, administrators and other school personnel to meet those needs.

In October of 1973, the State Board of Education approved the staff development policy that enabled educators to renew professional certificates by participating in an approved local staff development program. In 1974 the State Board approved policies that eliminated life certificates, signifying that the continued education of educational personnel is not only desirable but necessary to the quality of education in Georgia.

After the State Board's approval of the State Plan for Staff Development, school systems submitted plans to the State Department of Education and implemented educational improvement activities to meet identified student needs. Systems that have operated approved programs for two years are now eligible to submit staff development plans for certification renewal.

The culmination of this extraordinary effort by a large number of people and organizations in and out of the educational community is the present Standards for Certification Renewal Through Staff Development. In early 1976 a statewide workshop was conducted to introduce the standards and begin the

process of developing among educators the means by which to implement the idea.

REGULAR LOCAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development is defined in Georgia as a program designed to prepare local educational personnel to implement specific improvement activities directed toward locally determined priority student needs.

Each local school system is granted an allocation for staff development. However, in order to receive staff development funds, each local school system must develop a local staff development plan that will be submitted to the State Department of Education for approval. (See Program Application and Budget Sheet - Attachment A.) The Georgia State Plan for Staff Development is based on the assumption that one way to improve education is to update and upgrade the knowledge and skills of existing educational personnel. Through the State Plan the State Board of Education encourages local school systems, Cooperative Educational Services Agencies, and institutions of higher education to work cooperatively in developing creative and improved ways for increasing the effectiveness of existing local educational personnel.

PROCESS DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The primary goal of staff development programs is to reduce the discrepancy between the level of performance desired of students and the level of performance which presently characterizes students.

Thus the first step in any staff development program is to identify those student needs that the staff, students and community value as having highest priority for any concentrated improvement program.

In determining these priority student needs, local school systems conduct surveys of teachers, parents, students; check reports from comprehensive school study committees, accreditation reports, national professional publications,

concerns expressed by public media, local and state board minutes; and analyze results of statewide and local testing programs, diagnostic and achievement tests, current and completed educational improvement projects. The local school board then decides which needs have top priority.

Once priority student needs have been determined, the next step is to select educational improvement activities which have been proven effective in another setting in meeting the particular student needs in question.

Before choosing educational improvement activities, the system must determine the most probable cause(s) for the existence of the student need. The categories to be inventigated might include the teaching methods of the staff, curriculum offered the students, the materials available to the staff and students, and the organizational structure of the system. Once the causes of the need have been outlined, educational improvement activities can be chosen that will be aimed at those causes.

Possible alternatives for alleviating the causes and meeting the needs of a system can be identified from publications and lists of validated educational improvement programs.

In order to select the most appropriate alternative(s), the local system should compare each possible alternative with its needs statements, objectives and resouces in the areas of relative advantages, compatibility, complexity, financial costs, time factors, space requirements and support needed to carry out the program.

For any staff development activity to be directed toward a given educational improvement outcome, competencies needed by educational personnel must be specified. In order to implement an improvement program, the local system must define what its educational personnel need to know, what kinds of judgments they must be able to make, what skills they need and what attitudes they must have.

After the student needs are identified, improvement activities are selected and competencies needed by educational personnel are specified, the local system designs the staff development program. There are many possible alternatives for the local system: (1) approved graduate programs which are designed to meet local school system improvement activities as related to identified student needs; (2) individual graduate program whereby each individual has developed his own program of study to meet school system needs as related to identified student needs; (3) independent study in which the individual contracts with the local school system for an individualized program of instruction; (4) contracted staff development activities whereby the school system contracts with an outside agency to provide educational experiences for improving competencies; (5) school-based programs where the system concentrates on an entire school toward the improvement of a specific program area; (6) program-based where the system elects to concentrate on program areas on a system-wide basis; and (7) locally conducted staff development activities.

The design of a staff development program would include the types of activities to be conducted; the staff members to be involved; the available resources, materials, and funds needed; who is to conduct the activities, the dates of the activities; and facilities needed for the activities.

Administrative leadership, procedures and resources necessary to the success of a staff development program must be identified. This provision of administrative leadership policies and procedures tends to assure that educational personnel have the opportunity to implement new procedures and innovations, that administrative personnel are involved and informed concerning new procedures and innovations, that the school and/or school system is committed to the successful achievement of the goals and performance objectives of the staff development program, and that the educational personnel will receive recognition for involvement, achievements and motivation toward meeting identified student needs.

To maintain an on-going and successful educational improvement program(s), evaluation is necessary. Assessing the strengths and deficiencies of a program will give feedback for further planning and organization to achieve the objectives. Assessment should focus on student growth, educational personnel competencies, and administrative leadership.

A plan for evaluating educational improvement program(s) includes a specification of procedures and instruments to be used in assessing student growth, educational personnel competencies and administrative support, an analysis of results of data obtained on these three areas; and a statement concerning how the results of this related data will be used for further staff development.

CERTIFICATION RENEWAL THROUGH LOCAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Effective July 1, 1974, life certificates were eliminated by the Georgia Department of Education. All professional certificates issued after that date are renewable certificates. Professional certification can be renewed upon completion in an area of assessed need of either (A) ten (10) quarter hours of senior or graduate credit, or (B) ten (10) staff development units (SDUs) provided through a system's approved staff development plan for certification renewal credit, or (C) five (5) quarter hours of college credit and five (5) staff development units (SDUs). Certification renewal through local staff development is based on the philosophy that preparation should be continuous throughout the career of professional educators. Further, certification renewal in the context of assessed needs is based on the philosophy that such preparation should be related to the improvement of one's on-the-job performance as related to local systems' goals and objectives.

The Georgia State Plan for Staff Development makes it possible for local school systems to submit local staff development plans for certification renewal credit designed to assist local personnel in improving their on-the-job performance as related to local goals and objectives. Additional state funds are available to local school systems that have approved comprehensive staff development plans for certification renewal credit. However, local plans have to be developed according to the Standards for Certification Renewal through Local Staff Development (see Attachment B).

STAFF DEVELOPMENT OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

In Georgia's performance-based certification model, initial preparation is to be extended into the initial years of employment to include staff development efforts which are based on the identified needs of the teacher on-the-job. This will enable the local school system to provide for each new teacher a planned staff development and supportive supervision program designed to assist him/her in demonstrating those competencies expected of a professional educator. Under performance-based certification, a teacher will convert his/her initial non-renewable certificate to one that is renewable by demonstrating effecting teaching on-the-job. This could take up to three years; however, it will be possible to convert after one year. As a consequence of these certification changes, local school systems will receive additional state funds to enable them to plan, develop and implement staff development programs for beginning teachers.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The State of Georgia has been divided into regions, and staff members from the Divisions of Staff Development and Educational Development have been assigned responsibilities for providing technical assistance to systems in

their region. Each regional consultant conducts drive-in conferences in his/her region to explain in detail procedures for regular local staff development, certification renewal through local staff development and staff development of beginning teachers. They also are available for technical assistance to individual school systems on a day-to-day basis throughout the year.

Supplemental publications are available from the Department to aid local school systems in planning, developing and implementing local staff development programs. They are:

- Resource Guide for Staff Development
- Staff Development: Sources and Resources
- Procedures and Patterns for Staff Development Programs
- Needs Assessment Package
- Certification Renewal Through Staff Development
- Resource Guide for Staff Development of Beginning Teachers

Attachment A

REGULAR LOCAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION

School System _____

I. Identify priority areas of student needs as a result of a systematic needs assessment. (Do not identify local teacher competency needs.)

II. Describe the educational improvement program(s) in curriculum, instruction or administration which will be implemented to meet student needs.

III. Identify knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by educational personnel to implement educational improvement program(s) which relate to identified student needs. (Please relate each of these personnel competencies to a specific educational improvement program identified in Item II.)

IV. Implementation of Staff Development

For each proposed staff development activity, please provide the following descriptive information using the tabular format shown in chart below:

A. Training activity number
B. Description of training activity
C. Specific training objectives to be reached through each training activity
D. Length of each training activity (clock hours or days, etc.) and the proposed training dates or periods (August 15-19; Fall and Winter Quarter, etc.) that training will occur
E. Kind of personnel (elementary principals, high school math teachers, etc.) to be trained through each training activity
F. Anticipated number of each kind of personnel to be trained through each training activity.
G. Name of training agency for each training activity

No.	Staff Development Activity	Training Objectives	Length and Training Dates	Personnel to be Trained		Training Agency
				Kind	Number	
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)

V. Identify the responsibilities and contributions of administrators in each phase of the staff development program to include planning, participation in workshops, monitoring, evaluation and providing resources.

VI. Develop an evaluation plan to assess changes in the following areas:

A. Student Improvement
B. Educational personnel competencies
C. Administrative procedures

Signed _____
System Superintendent

Date _____

BUDGET INFORMATION SHEET

The budget sheet is provided to assist local school systems in determining the areas of expenditures which are necessary for local staff development programs. An accounting procedure of state grant funds for staff development must be provided at the local school system level according to the requirement in the Georgia Accounting Handbook for Local School Systems. If there are questions concerning these procedures, please contact the Financial Review Section, Georgia Department of Education, Atlanta, Georgia, 30334.

State grant funds for staff development may be used for budget items such as contracts for training, individual grants for college tuition, training materials, contracts for services, and substitute teacher salary. Description of budget items must be identified in Column (B) on the budget sheet as per each training activity.

State grant funds for staff development may not be used for the following items:

- Salary supplement of local personnel
- Purchase of student materials
- Purchase of equipment

Please submit budget and plan by May 1, 1978, to:

Mr. J. Fulton Stone
Staff Development Coordinator
Staff Development and Teacher Education
Georgia Department of Education
302 State Office Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

(404) 656-2433

REGULAR LOCAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT
BUDGET SHEET

System _____

(A) Training Activity Number (as per Item IV on application)	(B) Budget Item Description	Regular Staff Development Funds	For State Use Only
	TOTAL		

DE Form 0755, October, 1975
(Revised, January 1978)

System Superintendent's Signature

Attachment B

PROCEDURES AND STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION RENEWAL THROUGH LOCAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

I. Frame of Reference

Professional certification can be renewed upon completion in an area of assessed need, of either

A. ten (10) quarter hours of senior college or graduate credit, or

B. ten (10) staff development units provided through a system's approved staff development plan, or

C. five (5) quarter hours of college credit and five (5) staff development units.

Certification renewal is based on the philosophy that preparation should be continuous throughout the career of professional educators. Further, certification renewal in the context of assessed needs is based on the philosophy that such preparation should be related to the improvement of one's on-the-job performance as related to local system goals and objectives.

II. Definitions

Staff Development Unit (SDU)

Staff development units are based both on contact hours of instruction and on verification that the intent of the instruction has been implemented on the job. Ten contact hours of instruction equal one SDU. The minimum for any one training activity must be 10 contact hours. Educational personnel will be permitted to earn a maximum of ten SDUs annually which must be completed during validity period of certificate.

Contact Hours

Contact hours are the actual clock hours of instruction received or pursued by the individual to renew a professional certificate.

Verification

Verification is the local system's documentation that the intended outcomes of staff development instruction have been adequately demonstrated in the on-the-job performance of the participant.

III. Application Procedures

There are three application procedures concerning plans for certification renewal credit. These are as follows:

A. Comprehensive Plan Application - A local school system may submit a comprehensive application under which the system will plan and organize a certification renewal plan that could give certification renewal credit for all staff development within that school system. This plan must satisfy standards described in IV.

B. Program Application - A local system may submit a single proposal for program application for certification renewal credit for the staff development activity addressed in the proposal. This differs from a comprehensive plan application in that the local system would not have to comply with Standard A (Goals, Policies and Procedures) nor with the establishment of a certification renewal committee as set forth within Standard C (LEA Approval of Individual Staff Development Plans). There must be compliance with all other standards in regard to the specific competencies educators are expected to demonstrate on the job as a consequence of the staff development activities outlined in the program application.

C. Agency Application - A college, CESA or any other public or private agency may submit an application for certification renewal credit. This application must meet the intent of each standard. Under Standard A, the applicant must present a process for insuring that the objectives of the certification renewal plan are consistent with system's goals and improvement objectives before individuals are allowed to participate for certification renewal credit. Under Standard C, the applicant must present a process for having prior approval of each individual certification renewal by local system superintendent or his designate rather than a local committee. The applicant must comply with all other standards as they are written.

IV. Procedures and Standards for Obtaining State Approval of Staff Development Plans for Certification Renewal

The local school system shall submit to the Georgia Department of Education for approval a comprehensive plan for certification renewal. To be approved to grant certification renewal credit, the local system must have operated an approved staff development program for at least two years. Plans for certification renewal shall adhere to the following standards (except as indicated in III, B and III, C above).

A. Goals, Policies and Procedures

The local staff development plan must include a list of broad student goals and a list of educational improvement practices toward which certification renewal will be directed. System policies and procedures for recommending individuals for certification renewal must be approved by the local board and included in the local plan.

B. Educational Personnel Needs Assessment

In developing the local staff development plan, the system must indicate how both external and self-assessment of educational personnel will be conducted.

C. LEA Approval of Staff Development Plans for Individuals or Groups

Local system criteria and procedures for giving prior approval of individual plans for certification renewal must be included in the local plan. Staff development plans must include

student goals being addressed

improvement practices to be implemented

competencies to be demonstrated with associated performance indicators identified

preparation plans (when, who, how and where)

on-the-job assessment procedures (when, who and how).

A logical relationship among these components will serve as one criteria in the approval of an individual plan for certification renewal.

Plans for certification renewal for individuals or groups must be approved by a certification renewal committee appointed by the local board of education or superintendent. Committee members should have experience in the following areas

- Assessment procedures - The knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to set up procedures to observe and appraise an educational situation objectively and make process-product evaluations of individual performance.
- Processes of the committee for certification renewal - Each member must be thoroughly versed in all processes and procedures of the committee and in the assessed needs of the system and its plans for dealing with the needs through staff development.
- Any other areas of expertise deemed necessary by the local board of education.

D. Completion of Preparation

The local plan must contain the criteria and procedures to verify that the individual has completed the preparation phase at an acceptable level.

E. On-the-Job Assessment

The local plan must contain procedures for conducting an objective on-the-job evaluation over an adequate period of time regarding the demonstration of competencies set forth in the individual or group certification renewal plan. The procedures should include

selecting and preparing qualified evaluators;

reports or documentation to be made at conclusion of each evaluation. The evaluation report must confirm the attainment of desired competencies with respect to identified performance indicators.

F. Recommendation for Certification Renewal

Criteria, policies and procedures for recommending individuals to the Georgia Department of Education for certification renewal credit must be contained in the local plan.

Either a local committee as mentioned under Standard C or a qualified external evaluator who has been approved by the Georgia Department of Education could recommend a person for certification renewal credit. The recommendation would be based on a favorable review of evidence regarding preparation and on-the-job performance.

G. Program Coordinator

The local system shall identify a local person to coordinate the program for certification renewal. This person must have a minimum of a master's degree and the expertise required of members of the committee for certification renewal.

H. Record Keeping

The local plan must describe how sufficient records will be maintained to adequately document and verify the recommendation to State Department of Education for certification renewal credit.

I. Appeals Channels

Clearly defined procedures for resolving differences between program participants and the system must be included in the plan. Appeals channels must be identified and be included in the plan.

V. Modifications

The local system can submit to the Georgia Department of Education for approval any modifications of the initially approved plan at any time.

VI. Monitoring

The Georgia Department of Education will appoint two people from outside the Department to monitor each local plan annually from the initial date of approval. They will observe the following procedures

The monitoring visit will be a minimum of one day;

Details of the visit (time, place and agenda) will be agreed upon by the monitors and the local school system;

The visit must include a meeting with the local committee for certification renewal; and

A report will be filed by the monitors with the Georgia Department of Education with copies to the local system.

Five (5) copies of all certification renewal applications must be sent to

Mr. J. Fulton Stone
Staff Development Coordinator
Georgia Department of Education
30[illegible] State Office Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

(404) 656-2433